## REMARKS

This Amendment and Reply is intended to be completely responsive to the Non-Final Office Action mailed January 15, 2010. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present Application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow. Claim 34 has been amended. No new matter has been added. Accordingly, Claims 34-53 will remain pending in the present Application upon entry of this Amendment and Reply.

A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

## Oath/Declaration

On page 2 of the Detailed Action, the Examiner alleged for the first time that the Declaration submitted on April 11, 2006 is defective. Specifically, the Examiner alleged that the declaration is defective because of an allegedly non-initialed and/or non-dated alteration appearing in the Declaration. Applicants respectfully disagree, and submit that the Declaration is in compliance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.63 as originally filed. Applicants note that 37 C.F.R. § 1.52(c)(1) states that "[a]ny interlineation, erasure, cancellation or other alteration of the application papers filed must be made before the signing of any accompanying oath or declaration pursuant to § 1.63 referring to those application papers and should be dated and initialed or signed by the applicant on the same sheet of paper" (emphasis added). In the present Application, the alteration (i.e., the correction of an inventor's street address) appears on the same sheet of paper as the signature of the inventor. Requiring the inventor to further initial the alteration would be redundant under 37 C.F.R. § 1.52(c)(1) because the inventor has already signed and dated the Declaration immediately below the alteration. Accordingly, Applicants do not believe that a supplemental declaration in compliance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.67(a) is required, and once again submit that Declaration filed on April 11, 2006 is in compliance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.63 as originally filed.

**Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102**

On page 2 of the Detailed Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 34-36 and 42-53 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 7,332,207 to Bondar et al. ("Bondar et al."). This rejection should be withdrawn because Bondar et al. does not disclose, teach or suggest the claimed invention.

For example, independent Claim 34 (as amended) recites a "trim component for a vehicle" comprising, among other elements, a "substrate having a channel defined by a first wall and an opposite second wall, the second side wall being separated from the first wall by a base wall of the channel; [and] a skin having a protrusion and coupled to the substrate by engagement of the protrusion with the channel, the protrusion being in direct engagement with both the first wall and the second wall of the channel."

Bondar et al. does not disclose, teach or suggest such a trim component for a vehicle. In contrast, Bondar et al. discloses a component having a "skin 20" that directly engages a "side wall 16" and an adjacent "back wall 18" of a "substrate 12" rather than engaging the "side wall 16" and the wall opposite the "side wall 16." Specifically, Bondar et al. discloses that the "skin 20" includes a "terminal wall 30" that extends from a "perimeter wall 28." The "perimeter wall 28" engages the "side wall 16" of the "substrate 12" while the "terminal wall 30" engages the "back wall 18" (col. 3, lines 39-45). From the Figures, particularly Figures 3-5 and 8, it is clear that neither the "terminal wall 30" nor the " perimeter wall 28" engage any portion of the wall that is opposite the "side wall 16" (shown as a "first side wall 74" in Figure 3). In fact, a sizeable gap is shown between a free end of the "skin 20" and the "first side wall 74." As such, Bondar et al. does not disclose, teach or suggest a skin that is configured to be coupled to a substrate by the direct engagement of a protrusion with both a first wall and an opposite second wall of a channel defined by the substrate, as required by independent Claim 34.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of independent Claim 34 because at least one element of such claim is not disclosed, taught or suggested by

Bondar et al. Claims 35, 36 and 42-53, as they depend from independent Claim 34, are allowable therewith for at least the reasons set forth above, without regard to the further patentable subject matter set forth in such claims. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection of Claims 34-36 and 42-53 is respectfully requested.

**Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103**

On pages 2-4 of the Detailed Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 37-41 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bondar et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,991,841 to Cowelchuk et al. ("Cowelchuk et al.") or alternatively in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,895,613 to Nakai et al. ("Nakai et al."). This rejection should be withdrawn because Bondar et al., alone or in any proper combination with Cowelchuk et al. and/or Nakai et al., does not disclose, teach or suggest the claimed invention.

In rejecting Claim 37-41, the Examiner acknowledged that Bondar et al. does not disclose providing a vacuum aperture in the substrate. In an attempt to correct this deficiency, the Examiner cited separately to both Cowelchuk et al. and Nakai et al. for allegedly teaching this subject matter.

Claims 37-41 depend from independent Claim 34. As detailed above, Applicants submit that independent Claim 34 recites a combination of subject matter that Applicants believe to be allowable over Bondar et al. Neither Cowelchuk et al. nor Nakai et al. correct the deficiency of Bondar et al. that was detailed above. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 37-41 at least because of their dependency from independent Claim 34, without regard to the further patentable subject matter set forth in such claims.

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Applicants believe that the present Application is now in condition for allowance. In particular, even when the elements of Applicants' claims, as discussed above, are given a broad construction and interpreted to cover equivalents, the cited references do not teach, disclose, or

suggest the claimed subject matter. Favorable reconsideration of the present Application as amended is respectfully requested.

Further, Applicants respectfully put the Patent Office and all others on notice that all arguments, representations, and/or amendments contained herein are only applicable to the present Application and should not be considered when evaluating any other patent or patent application including any patents or patent applications which claim priority to this patent application and/or any patents or patent applications to which priority is claimed by this patent application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by the credit card payment instructions in EFS-Web being incorrect or absent, resulting in a rejected or incorrect credit card transaction, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicants hereby petition for such extension under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 and authorize payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. The Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned by telephone if the Examiner believes that another telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present Application. Please direct all correspondence to the undersigned attorney or agent at the address indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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